

..PRAIRIE BOY IN A SEA FIGHT..

The younger boys of Wichita who have heard Ned Larimer's experience have quit reading naval stories, and have ceased sighing for a life on a United States man-of-war.

From young Mr. Larimer's narration, part of which may be charged up to modesty, it is evident even to an imagination that is willing to give a name situation with inner emotions, that the stimulating element of romance is not in a naval battle.

An effort was made to get Mr. Larimer to grant that those above him and under him were excited in the contest off Santiago harbor. The effort failed simply because Mr. Larimer was positively sincere that there was no excitement.

He was on the Indiana, in the forward turret on the left thirteenth gun. He is a Kansas boy. For years the biggest body of water he ever saw was the Arkansas on a June term, his idea of craft was a sixteen-foot row boat. His idea of nautical perfection, to feather his oars. His idea of marksmanship was to get a ball to first from right field before the runner got there.

A few years' experience on the great ocean has made him better acquainted with the difference between a cat-boat and a yawl, than between a sunflower and a tosin plant.

He is difficult of extended conversation because, among his old-time friends, the discourse is like a small plug train on a many-stationed railroad line with a water tank between each and leaky boilers on the engine. It is a perpetual stop, explanation and continuation, stop, explanation and continuation.

"I was standing on the fo'c's'l' all in one breath and accented hard on the 'fo'."

"On the what?" asked the Kansas-bred reporter.

"On the fo'c's'l'."

"How do you spell it?"

"F-o-r-e-c-a-s-t-l-e."

"Oh, forecastle."

"That's right. Only we pronounce it differently."

"Where is it?"

"It's forward."

"Front end of the boat?"

"The ship."

And then a little further along:

"The first thing we did was to close the battle hatches."

"What's a hatch?"

"An opening in the deck of the vessel."

"Great Caesar. Did you close 'em and then stay on top?"

"Well, you don't exactly understand. You see—"

"You closed the hatches, and then how did you get down below deck or how did anyone get up?"

"We went inside the turret. There was a hatch there and others inside the superstructure."

"Oh, the battle hatches were on the open deck and exposed the center of the boat and are not used during a battle."

The young naval hero assented and the plain-bred reporter placed in his memory a great marine discovery.

And then a little further along in the conversation:

"Where was Schley's ship then?"

"A little about our beam."

"A little where?"

"About our beam."

"For heaven's sake, what's about and what's your beam?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

"What's that?"

ement on the part of the men around the guns during the battle.

Naval Cadet Larimer, at 8:30 o'clock on that Sunday morning, had gone up on deck, forward. The sky was clear and bright. However, he did not notice it in particular. He heard the navigator who was watching the shore with binoculars say rather quickly, but not excitedly, with every word separated with a little pause, and every syllable sharp:

"Jump-and-tell-the-captain—that-something-is-coming-out-of-the-harbor."

There was nothing hysterical, joyous or emotional in this order to an orderly.

Larimer turned quickly, of course, to look at the harbor. Back of the hills and over them there was a lot of stringy smoke.

Everybody set to work to close the battle-hatches, the exposed openings in the deck.

This done, Larimer rushed into the turret, the forward thirteenth gun turret. For these movements he did not seem to remember any orders.

In exactly four minutes from the time the navigator sent word to the captain about the stringy smoke, the thirteenth gun had belched forth its gigantic missile of death.

Larimer, once in the turret, said quickly:

"Jump down boys. Turn on all steam and pressure. Unblock turret."

The big gun is run by hydraulic pressure, also the ammunition hoists and the turret, when not used, is locked.

Then came the orders in this fashion:

1—Up-lift.

2—Out nose-plin.

3—First cartridge.

4—Second cartridge.

5—Down lift.

6—Ready lift.

Up-lift meant for the ammunition hoist to be sent up. The lift had three wrought iron cylinders, one containing the shell, the projectile weighing 1,500 pounds, the other two cylinders containing the charges of powder. As the first cartridge passed into the gun, the second was announced. Down-lift meant to lower the hoist, and ready-lift meant that below the hoist was ready again. Out nose-plin meant that as soon as the hoist arrived the cylinders containing the projectile and charges were to be

opened by the removal of a pin.

As the turret rolled easily on its mountings with no perceptible jar, through slits provided they could see the target, progressing. Of course they did not then call the ships by their names, but "first ship," "second ship" and so on, in the order in which they came out of the harbor.

At this time the Spanish ships were frantically about hidden by the smoke from their guns and funnels. Sometimes only the prow would be visible; sometimes only a funnel. An enemy's gun fired directly at you is a big puff of smoke and a flash of red.

The boys in the turret got orders to concentrate their fire on the Oquendo. They watched the effect of their shots with calmness and confidence. There was no cheering and no exclamations of delight.

When a shell hit on the superstructure the instant fountain of debris and smoke and the immediate succeeding air of stillness at that point satisfied them that they had shot home. One shell made a rent in one of the enemy's ships which they could plainly see.

The gun during the engagement fired twenty shots. The turret was not uncomfortably warm. The gun was not hot. Back of the breech are electric fans to drive the smoke out of the gun through the muzzle. A good deal of the smoke curled back in the turret when the breech was opened and made the place dim and gaseous, and there was a good deal of coughing among the men.

When the gun was fired there was no discomfort from the shock. They didn't stand on tip-toe to lessen the concussion. A knock gun above them made a disturbance which gave them the only jar they received.

They had no other idea than that they were going to destroy the enemy's ships. They had no thought about the possible death on their side. They believed that somebody must be getting killed in the American fleet, but that was only a transient impression rather than a thought. They simply felt grateful that they had a chance to get at the enemy and test that gun and excel the other turrets.

In that they worked like Trojans, but with a cold calculating realization that

the more methodical and less emotional they were about it the more shots they would fire and the more credit they would get. They were imbued with the idea that the engagement surely could not last long, and there was no time to waste.

Someone brought a bucket of water into the turret. Occasionally some of the men would take this bucket up and have a drink, but for the most part the men did not drink at all. They were too busy.

Finally out of the harbor came the two Spanish torpedo-boats. They headed for the Indiana. The thirteen-inch guns were not needed against these long, nearly submerged slender boats and the boys were ordered to cease firing. However they trained the gun so that in case of a too near approach they could help smash the invaders.

After the fight went up on top the turret and sat on it, smoking pipes and viewing the scene melancholically. They could see the Oregon in the offing chasing away after the Colon. The New York came up and told the Indiana to go back to the blockading station. They turned about and steamed back. The Oquendo, the Teresa and the Vizcaya were beached about as far from the shore as the Eagle office is from Cash Henderson's store. They were burning fiercely and presented a very grand sight. Larimer saw no men on board the ships burning, although he thinks some burned to death. But not many. He saw many swimming to shore, not a long swim by any means. The smoke was rolling lazily from the big stacks and every once in a while there was a prodigious explosion full of flame and carrying debris hundreds of feet in the air.

Even then the men sitting on top the turret smoked away with the complacency of a spectator toward the end of a fireworks exhibition.

They all felt great satisfaction over the scene, and speculated considerably over what the Oregon was after, but there was nothing emotional about it.

"I guess it's our training," said Mr. Larimer.

The day after the battle he visited the wrecks to see the effects of the shells. The ships were still very hot. As the waves lapped up against the side of the ships there was a slight hiss. One of the shells

from his turret had penetrated the admiral's room on one of the Spanish ships. It had exploded and wrecked everything, which had further been charred by the fire. Some parts of the shell lying about were as small as a man's hand. Nothing at all was intact in the room. Even a gold coin had been melted down.

Pictures have appeared in the newspapers of men climbing up the rigging like bees while the ships were burning. He saw nothing of the kind.

Another feature of the battle was that Larimer saw none of the officers wearing swords, and he does not believe that the Spanish officers wore them.

Orders did not occupy the dramatic part in a battle they are supposed to occupy. They came through speaking tubes or by messengers who delivered them as they delivered ordinary messages.

Naval Cadet Larimer does not wear a uniform in Wichita. He had not completed his course in Annapolis when he was sent to Santiago, and he returns to the naval school.

With him he brought back several souvenirs, now on exhibition at Vail's jewelry store. They are as follows:

Spanish officers' sword, from the deck of the Oquendo. Plainly a very ornamental affair before the fire reached it.

Spanish revolver, from the deck of the Maria Teresa. The fire has welded them together.

Hexagonal brown powder, from the Oquendo; very badly burnt but not discharged.

Two pieces of brown hexagonal powder such as is used on the Indiana.

Mausser bayonet, from the deck of the Maria Teresa.

Old canister, from the fort at Guantanamo de Cuba.

One-pounder cartridge casing fired from the Indiana.

Mausser bullets, Spanish, found at Morro castle.

Brass-jacketed bullets used by the Spanish.

A fuse of a Spanish 12-inch shell of the Oquendo.

ed their lips in mock anticipation. The crowd wanted a cut fitted with cushions appliances in the pants. This arrangement being comparatively new in the city, it was discussed at length. The discussion took place in the parlor of an elegant home in Wichita after the party had returned from a spin and a visit to the ladies, who, as accomplished pianist, had played two or three selections. Finally, when about all the advantages of such a costume had been mentioned, the young lady musician turned to Mr. Holcomb quickly and said:

"What if you should have a puncture?"

"Just be two pops in one pair of pants."

IN THE SHADE OF A WAGON.

Last Wednesday a stranger walked into Justice Enock's office and said he wanted to be married.

"All right," said Mr. Enock, "where's your bride?"

"She's up the street a little way. If you will come with me it won't take long."

They went down stairs, up Main street to Central and West on Central to Waco. That was almost a mile and Mr. Enock kept looking for the man to turn in. But he didn't. At Waco they started north and plucked along to Fifteenth street, where they turned west again. Coming up to a group of campers, the stranger stopped and called to his bride. The two stood up in the shade of a wagon and were made man and wife, giving their names as Trues McKesson and Ollie Henderson. McKesson, in his covered wagon, came up with Miss Henderson's people two weeks before in Missouri. They carried together a night or two. The two youngsters fell in love and Judge Enock finished the story for them only two weeks after their first meeting. When the ceremony was over McKesson took Mr. Enock to see his bride and gave him a dollar. When Enock reached his office again he had walked nearly three miles. But then the experience was worth something.

HAD A FELINE STEW.

Firemen are as a general rule great jokers. Most of their pranks are on the practical. This is caused no doubt on account of the time they have to spend in their hands. Only at rare times are they allowed to leave the station unless it happens to be their day off.

About three years ago, at the station in West Wichita, was played a joke which was intended as a moral. At any rate it had the desired effect.

The boys had obtained a kettle and a frying-pan. It was during the winter, and every night the boys would gather around a table and play until 11 or 12 o'clock. About half an hour before it was time for the game to break up and for them to retire for the night they would either fry or stew some meat, waterbury or chicken. Sometimes a friend would give one of the boys a rabbit, and then they would stew it and have a treat. One of the firemen was a prodigious appetite, and never played cards with the rest of them. He constituted himself chief and would look to that which was in the pot. He had a fork and every few minutes while the rest were playing he would take a piece, until when the rest of the crowd got ready to eat there would be scarcely anything left. They operated his methods for quite awhile. Each night there would be but little left. They became very weary and threw out all kinds of hints without any effect.

At last one of the boys thought of a way to get even with him and try and stop to measure his appetite. Early every morning there passed by the station a milk man, who was coming over to this side to peddle milk. One of the firemen knew him well. He asked him if he had a cat out to his place that he would kill and dress for him. He agreed to pay for the cat. The milkman had one and would do as he wanted. It was stipulated in the contract that he was to bring the cat's hide and head intact with the dressed body. The next morning the milkman stopped at the firehouse and delivered the dressed cat and its hide. The body was put away for the evening meal and the hide and fur hid where it could be readily obtained.

When it came time for preparing the evening meal nothing unusual could be distinguished in the actions of the rest of the boys. One of them got the kettle on the stove, got the water and said to the rest: "Mr. So and So gave me a fine rabbit today."

That was enough. Some of them remarked

..GOSSIP FOR HOME PEOPLE..

A FELLOW FEELING.

On one of our busy corners yesterday sat a blind man, a forlorn looking piece of humanity who appeared to be the victim of the passer-by. The music was attempting to grind out could hardly be called music—a squeaky, worn-out organette. Finally two small boys came along. One of them had a paralyzed arm and a leg that he could just manage to swing along by giving it an extra hitch. They bore evidence of extreme poverty, but they halted near the blind man. The crippled lad said to his comrade: "Run your hand in my pocket and get my purse. I said got much but we will give him some."

The purse was drawn out and the contents emptied out into the hand of its owner—four cents. He stepped up in a shy, cautious way and dropped three of his pennies in the blind man's cup.

SOME BIG FISH.

Since the Sullivan dam broke and fishing is allowed in the water up there, people go up and, with dough-bait for bait, pull out carp weighing from three to nine pounds. One man on the West Side, who goes up every two or three days, says he has caught a hundred and fifty pounds of fish there in the last month.

TWO SUMMERS COMPARED.

There has been 35 inches more rainfall since May 1, 1897, than there was in the same season of 1897. Last year from May 1 to Sep. 10 the rainfall was 34 inches below the normal and this year it has been 19 inches above. This summer's average temperature has been several degrees lower than last year.

FIRST TIME IN SEVEN YEARS.

Frank Fomon, the Western Union clerk, went to Wellington Monday night with the Maccabee degree team. This is the first time Mr. Fomon has been out of Wichita in seven years, during which time he has never lost a day from his work.

MATTER OF CONDITION.

Walter Vincent says he noticed when he first received the cut in his arm, and the injury was considered serious, people who came in spoke of it as a "wound." When he got better and the excitement died out some and the cut began to heal they said "wound," giving the vowel the short "ow" sound.

SALVATION ARMY SOLDIER.

A few days ago Jack Gleason, a tramp printer, came into Wichita, having been his way here from down in the straits. He was riding on freight trains, finding as comfortable a berth as possible in a box car. At Arkansas City he jumped into an empty coal car and found that he had company. It was a Salvation Army soldier, with a boy about 1 year old. They both began praying, something that Mr. Gleason hadn't heard for a long time. At last the brakeman came along and made them all get up a few cents. He asked the Salvation Army soldier where he was going to and he said Wichita. The brakeman charged him 10 cents for the two. The soldier is now in this city and is to be seen each evening in the street parade.

ROASTING HIS WIFE.

There is one awful man in this city, and his consummate atrocity lies in his cynical attempt to roast his wife. A few days ago he remarked to a house friend: "Women are strange creatures. Don't you think so?"

"Just how do you mean?" replied his chum.

"Well, whenever it is a fearfully stormy day, and the rain pouring down in torrents, and the wind blowing a gale my wife invariably suggests that such a day will be a glorious one to stay at home and in the house."

"Yes, and what of that?"

"Oh, nothing, only just about then she always arrays herself in her macintosh and umbrella and proceeds to go somewhere."

FINE HORSEMANSHIP.

One day last week the usual group of hangers-on about the Union depot were witnesses of what they expected to be a dire calamity, but which turned out to be a narrow escape, solely from the fine horsemanship and cool head of the driver of the nervous team. A well-known suburban resident on the east side of town was driving into the city, and his span of young horses were right on his heels. At the

time, the yard laborer at the Santa Fe track was laboring out the tracks at the Douglas avenue crossing, and his iron wheelbarrow stood right in the middle of the roadway, filled with tools. A switch-engine was backing up and down the crossing at the same time, and the rushing team was crowded to get by. Someone yelled to the section hand to move his wheelbarrow, but he either did not hear or did not care to heed and only stopped aside to save himself. On tort the nery team, and to avoid the switch-engine was to run afoul of the barrow. The latter appeared to the driver to be the best way out of hand with dexterity born from long skill in handling horses, he turned straight into the barrow. Some of the bystanders intuitively closed their eyes, expecting one or both of the horses to be cut and mangled by the sharp edges of the iron burdurgury. With a quick and skillful turn, the driver drove his plunging team right onto the wheelbarrow, with the result that the inside horse leaped nicely over the obstruction, clearing it in one bound. The outside wheels struck it with a crash, but ran over it easily, and in another bound the rig was clear, the buggy uninjured and neither horse injured. The crowd cheered this exhibition of fine horsemanship, and the rider calmly kept on at the same pace, never lessening it any more than if the impending danger had been only a peanut shell.

ASTRAY—ONE POET.

During the recent cold snap of Thursday and Friday all the same people in the city have attempted to be original in expressing their approval or disgust with the change. Some kicked in a very disgruntled and unbecoming manner, while others said it was a welcome variation from the excessive heat. Only one gentleman, however, known to be a poet, expressed himself in poetic effusion, and his effort has placed himself, in the eyes of his friends, in the position of a serious question whether or not he was entirely in possession of his senses. He is still at large and under the close surveillance of the police, and this is his abortive effusion:

Who is dwindling, peaking, pining,
With the sun, so brightly shining?
See it warm the balmy zephyrs at their play!

O, this brisk and sparkling weather,
Puts our spirits all a-feather,
In a proper though intoxicating way.

O, this cold is awful frigid—
It has frozen my spirit rigid.
I am cold enough to drink caliche straight,
I will leave this bleak and mean land
And fly to Africa or Greenland.

Where the temperature is milder, so they state.

Cold the mercury in the meter—
Cold my hands and cold my feet are;
Cold beneath the cotton lamb's wool of my boots.

For it is cold enough, O sister,
My fine Grecian nose to blister.
Right into its rudimentary Greek roots.

Up in the third block on Main street there is a chicken coop in front of a buncher shop. During the hot weather the proprietor had the top of the coop covered with gunny sacks to protect the chickens from the sun. On one and was a hose which kept running and the chickens would get under it and cool off. During the past few days the water has been turned off. It being plenty cool enough.

PROTECTED HIS POULTRY.

Most of the straw hats have gone. The straw hats have been relegated to some closet or thrown away altogether. The women have got out their wraps and the men who are down town in the wraps are wearing light fall top coats. This year the cool, brick weather has come on several weeks ahead of most years.

STRAW HATS HAVE GONE.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.

A prominent business man said yesterday that business was better in Wichita this fall than it had been in six years. He said that his business had increased at least 50 per cent over the same time last year. Others report the same flourishing conditions. With the abundance of crops, everything points to a most prosperous business year. Larger stocks have been purchased and they are being sold at such a rate that clearly indicates an immense business a little later in the fall.

BUSINESS MUCH BETTER.